

Information Services Board Briefing Paper on the Office of the Secretary of State Digital Archives Project

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Description

The Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) requests Board approval to begin the acquisition process for the technology solution for a Washington State Digital Archives recommended in the feasibility study and the recommended phased project implementation.

Recommendation to the Board

ISB oversight staff recommends that the ISB approve the Investment Plan that OSOS has submitted. Staff further recommends that OSOS return to brief the ISB on the status of the acquisition process in six months (March 2004).

Recommendation to the Project

No recommendation at this time.

Status

Construction of an Eastern Washington facility to house records and the digital archives is currently under way in Cheney, Washington. The design of this facility is sufficiently flexible to meet system requirements. OSOS contracted with GlassHouse Technologies to conduct a full feasibility study on technology aspects of a digital archive. This study was completed and submitted to oversight staff on August 12, 2003. Copies were provided to members of the ISB for review prior to today's ISB meeting. Comments from members of the Board have been submitted to OSOS for response. The acquisition process is scheduled to begin in September 2003 upon ISB approval.

Schedule

The schedule for the development and implementation of the digital archive system is as shown:

Brief ISB	September 2003
Select External Quality Assurance	November 2003
Acquisition Process	January 2004
Phase I	January 2005
Phase II	July 2005
Phase III	December 2005
Phase IV – Full Implementation	February 2006

Budget/Cost

Implementation/development costs (4 years, 2003-2006):	\$3.6 million
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Life Cycle Maintenance costs (5 years, 2007-2011):	<u>\$6.6 million</u>
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Total cost:	\$10.2 million
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Issues

Impacts on state agencies and others using the state digital archives:

The project will require the rewriting of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 434 to ensure understanding by all state agencies. This effort has been dormant for approximately one year, but is expected to continue with the selection of a technical solution. The Customer Advisory

Board has a subcommittee prepared to resume work with OSOS and state agencies to review WAC requirements. To reduce the impact of this issue (risk mitigation) OSOS will strengthen contacts and participation with stakeholders.

Background

For over four years OSOS has been seeking a system to capture the increasing number of electronic records. Technology at the beginning of this search was lacking in all that is necessary to make digital archiving possible. OSOS has continued to monitor technology improvements. A feasibility study of existing alternatives for digital archiving has been completed. OSOS submitted an Investment Plan to the ISB for approval. The Digital Archives Project has been determined to be a Level 2 project based on the severity/risk analysis conducted by DIS/MOST and the project staff at OSOS. The digital archives project requires board approval since it was designated a proviso 901 project in the state budget.

The agency began strategic planning for the Digital Archives in March of 2000, when the project first appeared in the agency's Information Technology Portfolio. Planning for the physical design and technical infrastructure of the facility occurred during calendar year (CY) 2002. The state's 2001-2003 Capital Budget (SSB 6155) authorized the Secretary of State to enter into a financing contract for the construction. Early site work for the facility in Cheney, Washington began July 2002 with construction beginning January 2003. This facility will serve as the physical "hub" for the Digital Archives and is scheduled for completion in May 2004. This two-story facility will house both the Eastern Washington Regional Archives (traditional paper archives) as well as the Digital Archives serving both state and local government agencies.

Concurrently, research began on the programmatic and technological aspects of the Digital Archives. Site visits by project team members were made to the National Archives and the Library of Congress. A strategic plan was developed that included extensive involvement of staff, executive management and external stakeholders. The State's 2001-2003 Capital Budget also authorized some financing authority for the Office of the Secretary of State for the purchase of technology equipment and software for the Digital Archives. That authority was contingent on completion of a feasibility study for the project's technology and subsequent approval by the ISB.

As part of the feasibility analysis, alternatives to development of a centralized Digital Archives were discussed and subsequently rejected. No other alternative would meet existing legal mandates, adequately protect against the current loss of electronic archival records, or be as cost effective. The decisions to be made were more a matter of scale – how much technological capacity was required and at what point in time would that capacity is needed. In March 2003, GlassHouse Technologies, Inc., a vendor-neutral technology firm with specific expertise in mass storage architecture, was hired to assist the agency with assessing the technical feasibility of the project, proof-of-concept testing, determining system requirements, designing the system architecture and working with the agency to develop cost estimates. That work was completed in June 2003.